

DO YOU KNOW YOUR BRAIN TYPE?

IT COULD CHANGE THE WAY YOU PLAY FOREVER

JON NIEDNAGEL HAS MADE A LIFETIME OUT OF READING PEOPLE'S VOICES.

Ten minutes after introducing myself to Niednagel (pronounced "need-noggel") on the phone, he volunteers to offer insights into my tennis game. We've never met until this conversation. He doesn't know what I look like, nor has he ever seen me hit a ball.

He says my physique is hardly athletic. That's for sure. He explains why I hate drilling. Bingo. He details the sins of my strokes. Closer than I'd care to admit. He analyzes why I win and lose matches. Has this guy been sneaking into my club on Sunday mornings?

"It wouldn't surprise me," he adds, "if you were left-handed."

He's right as rain.

No, this is not the Psychic Tennis Network. This is a concept called "Brain Types," and it can greatly enhance your tennis game.

By understanding the attributes of your specific brain type, you'll:

- clarify the elements that contribute to your strengths;
- identify the physical and mental causes of your weaknesses;
- learn how and why you choke;
- determine how you should take lessons;
- create highly customized practice routines, and even select the right doubles partner.

Niednagel's premise is that everyone's brain is hardwired into one of 16 basic brain types. These 16 are based on his close study of the brain's physical landscape, the teachings of legendary psychologist Carl Jung and an athletic application of the popular Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (a personality test frequently used in schools and corporations to assess psychological profiles).

While it's possible to apply Niednagel's ideas to explain everything from why you hate your job to the tensions you feel around your in-laws, tennis players know those problems pale in comparison to vanquishing that nasty little dinker or hitting a second serve at 3-4, 15-30.

A lover of all sports, Niednagel has built a business on applying his ideas to athletic endeavors. Over the last 20 years, he has consulted with franchises in the NBA, NFL and Major League Baseball to help coaches and managers identify prospects, select talent and build well-matched teams. Former UCLA men's basketball coach Jim Harrick credits Niednagel with so skillfully evaluating his 1995 team that the Bruins were able to make adjustments that led to an NCAA title.

In tennis, Niednagel works closely with legendary teaching pro Vic Braden to assess playing styles and develop new teaching techniques. Following brief conversations with 104 tennis players at Braden's tennis college, Niednagel was able to properly evaluate all of them in a matter of minutes.

"Jon's insights can revolutionize the way people learn to play," Braden says. "Everyone's got this treasure chest of talent. But it's not always easy

BY JOEL DRUCKER, with tennis tips from Vic Braden

KNOW YOUR BRAIN TYPE

to unlock it. Brain typing holds the key to understanding your strengths, your weaknesses and the best way for you to improve."

Though Niednagel himself has an eerie personal talent for determining brain types simply from listening, his understanding of the brain has been extremely scientific. He has spent thousands of hours examining the geography of the brain. As Niednagel writes in his 1997 book, *Your Key To Sports Success* (Laguna Press, 800-748-5549), "Knowledge of the brain has changed monumentally as

we head into the 21st century. Neuroscience, which studies the nerves and nervous system, has found new doors for researching the brain's untold mysteries. Through the use of sophisticated brain-mapping instruments and other high-tech monitoring devices, scientists are achieving remarkable insight into cerebral activity. The latest findings supply critical data for those involved in applying this information to everyday life."

But again, we'll leave deeper cerebral activities

Sensing or iNtuitive. How you perceive the world—by drawing pragmatically on all five senses or believing in your own personal "sixth" sense of how the world operates.

Thinking or Feeling. How you go about making decisions—based on logic or emotion.

Judging or Perceiving. How you prefer to live your life—by a certain kind of work-driven order or a play-oriented flexibility.

EACH OF OUR BRAIN TYPES is the aggregate of four letters (see "Take the Quiz" on the facing page). Niednagel pegged me, for example, as an ENTP (Extroverted, iNtuitive, Thinking, Perceiving). Once you know your type, you'll be able to clarify why you play a certain way, how you can best improve and even compare yourself to similarly wired pros.

But it's important, Niednagel stresses, to distinguish between the way your brain is "wired" and the personality you develop as a means of meeting the demands of a particular activity. For example, Niednagel firmly believes that Pete Sampras is an Extrovert and Jimmy Connors is an Introvert. "You watch Sampras after he's won a tournament and he is relaxed, and you can tell this is a guy who likes talking to people and making connections," says Niednagel. "Connors may have adapted on-court bravado as a means of cooling his intensity, but off-court I'm certain he's quite guarded, withdrawn and not particularly forthcoming. His tennis game is combative, all about conserving territory. It's Sampras's expressive, fluid game, not his restrained persona, that shows he's extremely extroverted."

At the same time, it's possible for one brain type to yield many different tennis styles. According to Niednagel, Connors, Martina Navratilova, Monica Seles and Stefan Edberg all share the same brain type. "What they have in common is a particular kind of intensity," he says. "But within that type, you can build your game in many ways. The more comfortable you are, the more you're able to enter many other realms of your brain."

Niednagel also points out that what makes the pros so good is that they have fully tapped into their type's potential—and in many ways, transcended its inherent limitations. Gigi Fernandez, for example, is an ESFJ, a brain type that often lends itself to a fluid service motion and the need to work on fine motor skills—her wrists, forearms and volleys. "Honing those weaknesses helped make her a great doubles player," says Niednagel.

To determine your brain type, take the test on the facing page. Then turn to our "Meet your brain, help your game" chart on pages 46 through 49,

where you'll find the following helpful information:

- a roster of pros whose brain type matches yours;
- a description of your tennis style;
- an analysis of why you win;
- a breakdown of why you lose;
- what you need to do to improve;
- who is the best doubles partner for you; and
- Vic Braden's brain-type-specific tip for your game.



Relaxed in victory, Sampras is an Extrovert, says brain-type expert Niednagel. Connors, despite his on-court bravado, is an Introvert.

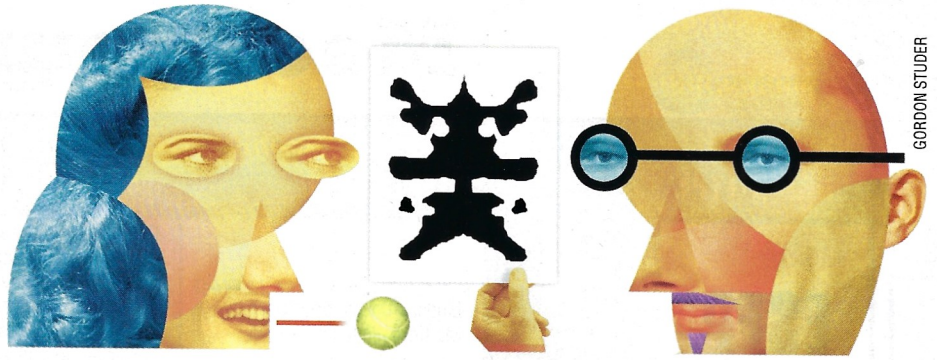


to others and focus our attention on gearing up for next week's league match.

According to Niednagel, the brain's circuitry is determined by four sets of preferences, pairings drawn heavily from Myers-Briggs:

Extroverted or Introverted. The former is energized by contact with people, the latter draws energy from within.

TAKE the QUIZ



GORDON STUDER

YOU DON'T NEED to have Niednagel's uncanny voice-reading skills to determine your brain type. Answer the 20 questions below as honestly as possible. Then follow the directions to determine your brain type. Once you have determined your type, turn to our "Meet Your Brain, Help Your Game" chart on the following pages. If your brain type begins with "E," look on pages 46 and 47. If your brain type begins with "I," look on pages 48 and 49.

Directions: Circle the letter of the words that best describe you. Then transfer your answers to the score-sheet below by checking off the appropriate answer box. Note that the sheet goes left to right. Add up your marks in each vertical column, and circle the letter with the higher score under each of the Roman numerated columns. The four letters you circled will indicate your brain type. For example, ESTJ.

1. **a.** higher energy level, sociable
b. lower energy level, reserved, soft spoken
2. **a.** interpret matters literally, rely on common sense
b. look for meaning and possibilities, rely on foresight
3. **a.** logical, thinking, questioning
b. empathetic, feeling, accommodating
4. **a.** organized, orderly
b. flexible, adaptable
5. **a.** outgoing, make things happen
b. shy, do fewer things
6. **a.** practical, realistic, experiential
b. imaginative, innovative, theoretical
7. **a.** candid, straightforward, frank
b. tactful, kind, encouraging
8. **a.** plan, schedule
b. unplanned, spontaneous

9. **a.** seek many tasks, public activities, interaction with others
b. seek more private, solitary activities with quiet to concentrate
10. **a.** standard, usual, conventional
b. different, novel, unique
11. **a.** firm, tend to criticize, hold the line
b. gentle, tend to appreciate, conciliate
12. **a.** regulated, structured
b. easygoing, "live and let live"
13. **a.** external, communicative, express yourself
b. internal, reticent, hold things in

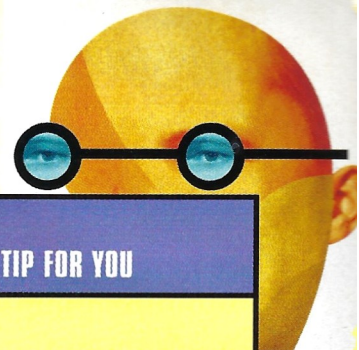
14. **a.** consider immediate issues, focus on the here and now
b. look to the future, global perspective, "big picture"
15. **a.** tough-minded, just
b. tender-hearted, merciful
16. **a.** preparation, work-minded
b. go with the flow, play-minded
17. **a.** active, initiate
b. reflective, deliberate
18. **a.** facts, things, seeing "what is"
b. ideas, dreams, seeing "what could be," philosophical
19. **a.** matter of fact, issue-oriented, principled
b. sensitive, people-oriented, compassionate
20. **a.** control, govern
b. latitude, freedom

		I		II		III		IV	
		a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
1.				2.		3.		4.	
5.				6.		7.		8.	
9.				10.		11.		12.	
13.				14.		15.		16.	
17.				18.		19.		20.	
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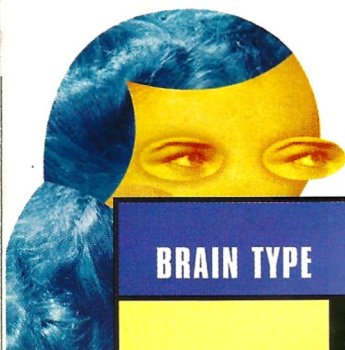
Meet your brain—

BRAIN TYPE	PROS WHO PLAY LIKE YOU	YOUR TENNIS STYLE	WHY YOU WIN
ESFP	 Lindsay Davenport, Conchita Martinez, Jennifer Capriati	Did you say you wanted to hit the ball hard? You've got the raw talent coaches salivate over. Your ability to use your large muscles helps you generate tremendous velocity and power on ground strokes and serves. You're also open-minded and can quickly try new techniques on court.	You know how to pound people into submission. When you're on, there's a magnetic, lightning-sharp quality to your tennis that overwhelms opponents and leaves them staggering to get up off the ground. Very few of your opponents hit harder than you.
ESFJ	 Gigi Fernandez	You're quite emotionally charged and exceptionally coordinated, particularly in using your entire body. Your extroverted nature and team mindset makes you a good doubles partner—someone with the enthusiasm to savor the moment.	Your motor skills make you quite adept at hitting a variety of shots. Your service motion is mechanically sound and rather fluid. You're not a huge risk-taker and prefer to keep the ball in play, wearing down opponents with exemplary consistency.
ESTJ	 Pam Shriver, David Wheaton	A predisposal to order gives your tennis a disciplined quality. You're a good athlete, adept at many sports. Conservative in nature, you play the percentages. Even if you're aggressive, you do it as a defensive measure rather than because you want to be boldly assertive.	There's a managerial aspect to your tennis that makes you a good doubles player. Your high-energy manual dexterity makes you a good volleyer. Partners find you efficient and focused. In singles, you rarely play loose points and usually force opponents to elevate their quality of play.
ESTP	 Andre Agassi, Goran Ivanisevic, Richard Krajicek, Patrick Rafter, Martina Hingis, Jana Novotna, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Boris Becker, Ilie Nastase	You love the limelight. Nothing gets you more excited than whipping big shots—and you've got the talent to hit them from anywhere. Your remarkable motor and visual skills give you an incredible aptitude for using your forearms and wrists to create spins, angles and power.	They had you in mind when they said "just do it." No other brain type starts a match with as much confidence. Your body takes over and the shots roll off your racquet. You feed off your opponent's pace and energy. Early on, it's hard to believe you have a single weakness.
ENFP	 Malivai Washington, Jonas Bjorkman, Venus Williams, Tracy Austin, Evonne Goolagong, Lori McNeil	Spontaneous, inventive and opportunistic, you bring tons of energy and excitement. You're capable of painting the court with shots delivered from every corner. You enjoy the flow that comes with hitting on the run.	You're a dangerous player. It's hard to establish a tempo against someone who strikes bold winners and is so innately athletic and zealous. You've got great reflexes, whether it's returning serve, volleying or snapping passing shots from incredible positions. When you're on, you're tough to beat.
ENFJ	 Jim Courier, Alexander Volkov	You're high-powered, competitive, ambitious and smoother than people give you credit for. That translates into a solid work ethic and a willingness to hustle. The honing of your strokes matters more than winning. Over time, this makes you strong and capable of generating lots of pace.	Hustle and enthusiasm carry you far. Competition for you is a matter of personal pride. With your values, you would never insult an opponent (or yourself) by throwing a match. You keep trying no matter what the odds. This indefatigable spirit helps you grind your way through long matches.
ENTP	 Pete Sampras, Gustavo Kuerten, Irina Spirlea, Greg Rusedski, Yannick Noah, Bobby Riggs, Guillermo Vilas, Suzanne Lenglen	You thrive on center stage. You're an ambitious, all-court player—someone who prefers shotmaking to the long, hard grind. ENTPs who learn stroking fundamentals early such as Sampras can eventually become quite fluid. Without extensive instruction, your strokes may be disjointed (Kuerten).	ENTPs like to make things happen and are always looking for ways to assert themselves—from mixing up paces and spins to striking bold shots and making sorties to the net. You have a physical looseness that enables you to whip shots in all directions. You're a resourceful on-court thinker.
ENTJ	 Alex Corretja, Brad Gilbert, Billie Jean King, Gabriela Sabatini, Tony Trabert, Mary Carillo, John Newcombe, Jack Kramer, Rick Leach	You are relentlessly competitive, love to take charge and are exceptionally adroit at dissecting an opponent's game. Aggression comes naturally to you, as does a willingness to work harder than virtually any other player. You expend tremendous energy whenever you're on a court.	You rise to the bait of a challenge. You're the CEO of the court, which means you have a big-picture sense of what it takes to win. You value stroke mechanics and work hard to simplify them. Your hearty style may not seem subtle, but there's a lot more thought to it than opponents realize.

help your game



WHY YOU LOSE	WHAT HELP YOU NEED TO IMPROVE	BEST DOUBLES PARTNER FOR YOU	BRADEN'S TIP FOR YOU
You get bored. Because you're more of a problem-solver than a long-term thinker, you focus point to point. You can quickly get distracted if you're not enjoying yourself or you start missing. Opponents who run down your shots can take the wind out of your sails, causing you to rush—and get angry.	Enjoy your tennis. Work on your fine motor skills and look for ways to stay loose. Take your time between points. Remember: You don't have to hit a thundering winner to get the job done.	The ENFP has the friendliness necessary to keep you from getting too anxious about winning or losing.	Spend 10 minutes before each match making a game plan—and clarify when you'll change it if necessary.
Under pressure, your normally proficient large muscles get too tight and you become rigid and tense, losing that spatial, strategic sense necessary for fluid stroking. All your instincts shut down. Failing to draw on any other resources, you become more anxious and far too results-oriented.	Work on the process of playing tennis. Emphasize fine motor skills—forearms and wrists—Round out your game with volleys, finesse shots and spins. Learn to strategize about matches conceptually rather than bearing down on yourself with ruthless analysis.	You need a good, aggressive net-rusher who'll complement your consistency, such as an ENTJ.	Stand halfway between the net and the service line and have your partner throw the ball to you so you can volley it. Then have your partner back up a step and keep feeding, eventually with a racquet. In time, you'll see that you have a lot more time to volley than you ever thought.
You hate to lose so much that you choke. Your ambition makes you more concerned with results than process, leading to tight, nervous strokes, and even injuries. Because you draw much more on logic than intuition, you get strategically rigid, ignoring the need for tactical shifts.	Relaxation is critical, particularly in your arms, wrists and hands. Learn to use all of your body. Techniques such as visualization of a particular stroke or match situation can help improve your spatial sense and pump up your intensity without increasing your anxiety.	An ENFP will help you laugh and enjoy yourself more.	In between points, loosen up by taking a deep breath. When you exhale, drop your shoulders and savor the moment.
So many possibilities flow that it's easy to lose concentration. Opponents who mix spins or move slowly between points can drive you crazy, causing you to overplay and get flustered. You have a hard time getting motivated against players you're expected to beat, causing bad losses.	Learn to bear down. As tough as it gets for you to do this, spend 30 minutes at a time hitting deep crosscourt ground strokes. Take a few extra practice serves. Slow down the tempo between points. And learn to get pumped up even if no one's watching you play.	You'll work well with the ESTJ, an equally fine motor-skilled player with good volleys. The ESTJ's versatility and sense of order also will help you calm down.	Extend your ability to concentrate by drilling and trying to keep as many balls in play as possible. Build up from 10 to 20 and on up to 50.
You're inconsistent. Because your tennis counts so much on divine inspiration, you float in and out of matches, losing concentration and inspiration. Since you tend to view tennis more as an art than a craft, under stress you'll become ineffective—both mentally and physically.	Work closely with instructors to master stroking fundamentals. But at the same time, take lessons from someone who can nurture your creative instincts and keep tennis fun. Strategically, a carefully thought-out game plan can pay great dividends for you.	Partner with an ISTP—they go for it and bring the intensity while you cheer the team on and know when it's time to have a good laugh.	Stay focused. See if you can hit 50 balls in a row without making an error.
Since you take competition so personally, you have difficulty keeping your emotions in balance. High-strung by nature, your intensity can overwhelm your efforts to play proficiently. You can get uptight and self-critical. You'll keep running down balls, but you'll lose track of the mission.	Learn to relax and play within yourself. The time for getting pumped up will come, but you must harness your passion and stay focused on each point. Think more about fluid, whole body movements rather than just trying to overpower the ball.	The ISFP is friendly, supportive and can help calm you down.	Set up the ball machine and work to take a very fast backswing—and then swing forward as slowly as possible, using your entire body and learning to mellow your intensity.
You're more up and down than you'd like to admit. Because the ENTP draws more on the head than the body, he or she can become physically undisciplined and impatient. Your lack of physical awareness can cause your strokes to disintegrate under pressure.	Improve your gross motor skills, getting your entire body into your strokes. Take lessons that hone specific mechanics. Spice up your practices with games and drills. Before matches, give yourself a couple of easy-to-remember physical tips to stay aware of your body.	The INTP shares your love of strategizing and also is willing to let you be the team leader. You'll help him or her hang loose and you'll both approach the match thoughtfully.	Hit against a ball machine or backboard with a folded towel wedged under your arm. This will force you to coil and use your entire body. It's fine for the towel to drop after impact. Just get the feel of using your entire body.
You tend to play the match in your mind, "delegating" the actual process of physically playing it. Competency is important to you, which means you could start to feel embarrassed against a stronger player and mentally capitulate.	A greater focus on process over results. The more you work, the better you'll play. Be honest about your weaknesses and focus on striking all of your strokes smoothly. Let go of your CEO reins, listen to your instructor and let yourself lose matches as you improve.	Go team up with that talented risk-taker, the ISTP. Playing with someone like this will help you get out of your mind and go for it a bit more.	In a practice session, make a commitment to the process—see if you can spend five minutes making sure you're on your front foot for every ball. When you do this, pat yourself on the back and then spend five minutes trying to get your body turned before the ball reaches the service line.



Meet your brain—

BRAIN TYPE	PROS WHO PLAY LIKE YOU	YOUR TENNIS STYLE	WHY YOU WIN
ISFP 	Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Bjorn Borg, José Higuera	You're more passive than most players, so you prefer a slower surface, such as clay. Strength in your big muscles makes you adept at two-handed shots; fluidity in your right brain gives you talent with spins. The most modest brain type, you're known for good sportsmanship.	Your unflappable persona is hard to crack. Opponents can't read you. There's also an underestimated tenacity lurking beneath your kind heart. When necessary, you'll run down balls all day. As a doubles partner, your friendly spirit is positive and calming.
ISFJ 	Not a common brain type in the pro game	Your legs are your mainstay, making you a good all-court player. Tennis to you is more of a social activity than a competitive battleground. You're a fun, friendly doubles player who enjoys running and hitting balls.	Winning doesn't mean that much to a hearty baseliner like you. But when you do compete, it's the personal interaction that matters. That's why you like playing doubles so much. You are extremely well-coordinated, with good gross motor skills, solid mechanics and fine body control.
ISTP 	Steffi Graf, Monica Seles, Petr Korda, Martina Navratilova, Jimmy Connors, John McEnroe, Michael Chang, Thomas Muster, Stefan Edberg, Ivan Lendl, Rod Laver	Focus, intensity and tenacity are the cornerstones of your game. When wed to hard work, you are better equipped to be an all-around player than any other brain type. Your fine motor skills translate into exceptional hand-eye coordination and skillful harnessing of your wrist strength.	Intensity and concentration make you very consistent. You don't need to plan so much as get on the court and go to work. Your focus lets you impose your weapons on opponents right from the start. Though attacking comes naturally, when necessary, you're comfortable hunkering down and grinding it out.
ISTJ 	Chris Evert, Paul Haarhuis, Stan Smith	Single-minded, consistent and methodical, you are conservative, logical and understand one of tennis's primary competitive principles: Make your opponent hit one more tough shot. This makes you an adept defensive player.	You construct points with a math teacher's precision. You have excellent dexterity, which gives you variety. Opponents feel you subtly grinding away as you throw up lobs, drive deep ground strokes or place solid volleys. There's nothing flashy about your game—just a relentless consistency.
INFP 	Cedric Pioline, Guy Forget	You have wonderful coordination—a ballet-like ability to harmonize your body on the court and move quickly. You're also a great mimic, which makes it easy for you to watch players hit and then imitate their form. These skills give your game a youthful, fresh quality.	Your introverted manner makes you a focused competitor. Being physically adept in so many ways gives you options. Whether floating on the baseline or darting in for volleys, yours is a versatile, fluid game. Your emotional side makes you hate losing, and you'll scramble for hard-to-reach balls.
INFJ 	Not a common brain type in the pro game	Though an overall energy conserver, you can play with lots of spunk when motivated. But unless you played a lot of sports or took lessons when you were young, your game tends to be quite mechanical and methodical.	You have the patience of Job. Your intelligence and perseverance make you a good student. You sponge up information, and enjoy experimenting with new concepts and strategies. This makes you a versatile competitor. Your innate sensitivity also makes you a great doubles partner.
INTP 	Mary Joe Fernandez, Arthur Ashe	You are conceptual, logical and cautious. You think independently, which makes an individual sport like tennis ideal for your generally nonathletic, introspective manner. On court, you're capable of seeing patterns in your opponents' styles and assessing matches in a thoughtful manner.	Your first-rate mind gives you tremendous focus. Your sharp understanding of the ebb and flow of a match helps you make the right plays on big points—smart lobs, sudden attacks or precise passing shots. Tennis for you is like a math exam—a series of problems that you'll solve one by one.
INTJ 	Jeff Tarango, Tim Mayotte	Determined, purposeful and cerebral, you work hard at tennis. Breaking down the mechanics of the game is fun for you. Your ability to reason and strategize has helped you improve and learn to win. Your independent nature makes you a solitary individual—a good persona for tennis.	Like a great baseball pitcher, you methodically know how to take an opponent apart. Carefully studying whoever you're playing, you pinpoint his or her least favorite shots and build your own workable game plan. Point by point, you assemble a victory in a determined, tenacious manner.

help your game

WHY YOU LOSE	WHAT YOU NEED TO IMPROVE	BEST DOUBLES PARTNER FOR YOU	BRADEN'S TIP FOR YOU
<p>Mustering consistent intensity is difficult for you. Sensitive to the needs of others, you'd often prefer doubles or rallying in lieu of the competitive cauldron of singles. Your passive nature makes you less aggressive and reluctant to add weapons. You'd rather lose pretty than win ugly.</p>	<p>Find a nurturing instructor. Hone your fine motor skills so you can build a looseness in your service motion and volleys. Your goal is to learn that it's possible to be modest <i>and</i> confident. Go for winners. Don't take losing personally. Meld that cool aura into desire.</p>	<p>You need the calm, thoughtful manner of the ISTJ, a player whose fine motor skills also makes him or her a good volleyer.</p>	<p>Learn to be more process-oriented. Set up targets on the court and just try to hit them without keeping score.</p>
<p>You'd just as soon rally and have fun. Since you take yourself so lightly as a competitor, you often play people worse than you and thus are rarely tested enough to improve. Somewhere inside there is a competitor waiting to get out—but you'd prefer to keep that part of you under lock and key.</p>	<p>Be clear why you play—and play on your terms, with the people you want and in situations that give you the most pleasure. Don't let competitive types hound you into things you'd rather not do. But if you do want to play to win, give thought to tactics.</p>	<p>You need a partner who isn't so invested in winning. The fun-loving ENFP is just right.</p>	<p>Have yourself videotaped playing a doubles match so you can learn to value your contributions to the team's success. Before the match, your temptation is to say, "I don't do anything." But once you've seen the tape, you'll have vivid proof of your value.</p>
<p>Intensity can backfire, as your introverted nature can lead to fixation with annoyances—bad calls, etc. When you tense up, your arm, wrist and fingers lose their fluid qualities. An ISTP who thinks too much (which often happens) can choke. You're also stubborn, reluctant to adapt.</p>	<p>Since generating intensity isn't a problem, learn to control emotions. Reduce the deep thinking and enjoy tennis. It may be a war for Connors, but remember that for you it's a leisure activity. Relax after points by looking at a tree or clouds. Try alternate game plans.</p>	<p>The ENTJ knows how to corral your talent. He's a smart, ambitious partner who can take charge, but who'll know when to shut up, leave you alone and get down to business.</p>	<p>Run up and down the lines of the court to learn balance. As you run up and down those lines, have a ball thrown to you, on the fly and on the bounce, and catch it.</p>
<p>Your fastidious, defensive style makes you reluctant to press an opponent when an opportunity presents itself. Aggression isn't easy. You want to come to the net on just the right approach shot for fear of being passed and looking stupid. Your consistency can also lead to predictability.</p>	<p>Cut loose and enjoy your tennis. By making matches less grim, you'll open your mind to new possibilities. On your strokes, emphasize fluidity and footwork, and experiment with spins and bold shots. Rely less on your arms and get more of your body into shots.</p>	<p>An ISTP will have a lot in common with you—but this partner also has enough of a swashbuckling spirit to help you loosen up.</p>	<p>Play a set and resolve that you'll come to net on every ball. This way you'll learn to let go and find out that it's not a matter of life or death to get passed.</p>
<p>Tennis is more aesthetic than practical for you. Since you're not too aggressive, you'll find yourself being out-hit in matches—and subsequently turning on yourself. You're very moody.</p>	<p>Learn from someone who emphasizes variety and fun over meat-and-potatoes work. Encouragement and the spirit of play is critical if you're to improve. Work to get more of your entire body and soul into every shot so that you can tap into your well of creativity.</p>	<p>The ISFP is a versatile, friendly player who also will provide that spirit of play you sometimes lack.</p>	<p>Be the team captain in a doubles match. On every point, call the play vocally.</p>
<p>You'd prefer the final result over the bloody, implicating process of competition. There's seemingly too much on the line for you when you play a match, and as a result, you eschew competition for fear it will gobble you up.</p>	<p>Pick your terms. Play with the people who give you pleasure—doubles, mixed or just rallying. Emphasize your desires when taking lessons. Put your intellect aside and learn to speed up the tempo on your strokes by adding more spin. Pump yourself up!</p>	<p>The ISTJ is a principled, honorable partner who'll support you, never use profanity and provide a calm atmosphere.</p>	<p>Get out of your structured regimen with a fast-hand net drill: You and your practice partner each stand at the service line hitting reflex volleys. This will help you stay calm and focus on process rather than outcome.</p>
<p>Living in your mind too much causes you to lose track of your body. Your introverted nature can make you too tight and unaggressive. Moreover, you are so committed to logic that you fail to muster the emotional intensity necessary to overcome a tenacious, irrational opponent.</p>	<p>Warm up rigorously before any big match. Get your body tuned and your mind will follow. Unwind every once in a while by trying to rip winners at opportune moments (such as when you're up 40-love). And remember to smile. It's a tennis match, not the SAT.</p>	<p>Put yourself in the hands of that gregarious and equally cerebral ENTP.</p>	<p>Loosen up by trying to juggle three or four tennis balls while walking around a set of cones.</p>
<p>Analytical by nature, you do not have innately fluid strokes or an extrovert's willingness to experiment with different strategies, especially in mid-match. Your body can get paralyzed by your smart thought process, which makes it difficult for you to demonstrate an athletic killer instinct.</p>	<p>Emphasize gross motor skills that utilize your entire body. Experiment with various game plans against different players so that you become comfortable adjusting. Even if you've thought a plan out beforehand, pay attention during the match so you can change.</p>	<p>The ENTP will help you have more fun and will provide just enough strategic variety to keep your team from falling into predictability.</p>	<p>Spend time before the match thinking carefully about your opponent's weaknesses and innovative, opportunistic approaches you might take to exploiting them. 🎾</p>

When to change a losing game

IT'S NEVER A GOOD FEELING WHEN your initial match strategy falters and your opponent takes command of the first set. A lot of players get emotional in this position, caught up in the fact that they are getting "smoked." But it is just at this time when you need to be objective. The truth is, finding a way to respond to your opponent is what competing in tennis is all about. You want to remain calm, observe why you are losing points, and never give up.

Jimmy Connors once said, "I never really lose. I simply run out of time before I find the answer." That is the mind-set you want to have when competing.

Before you change your strategy in a match that you are losing, first make sure it is your strategy that is the problem and not another aspect of your game. When you're falling behind, ask yourself three questions:

1. Do I have a good mental attitude? If your attitude or concentration is poor, you're going to lose no matter what strategy you try. Focus on improving your mental approach and stick with your initial game plan.

2. Am I fully warmed up and into the match? If you start the match with a lot of unforced errors, it may just be that you're still a bit cold and unsettled. You may find that the match will turn around once you break a

sweat, find your rhythm and start executing.

3. Is my opponent just on a temporary hot streak? Don't rush to change your game just because your opponent starts the match with a few lucky shots. If you've identified an opponent's weakness, don't let a few winners deter you from attacking it.

If your attitude and warm-up check out, and your opponent isn't merely in the zone, it may be time to change a losing game. When changing your strategy, follow these guidelines:

● **Always give your primary strategy a chance to work.** When your opponent comes up with an answer to your strategy at the beginning of a match, assume he has just gotten hot for a few games but that eventually reality will set in and your strategy will pay off. Often, if you continue to pressure a weakness, your opponent will crack. Keep this attitude through the first set. If you drop that first set, then it's time to change.

This attitude is the reason Patrick Rafter was able to reach the semis of the French and win the U.S. Open last year. He stuck with his game plan of serving and volleying and didn't resort to staying back just because his opponent hit a couple of great passing shots.

● **Never move too far from the core of your strengths.** Try to figure out a strategy to this match crisis that is somewhat consistent with your own strong points and a game style you are comfortable with. If you are a baseliner who doesn't feel comfortable at the net, don't suddenly serve and volley on every point.

● **Take match conditions into consideration.** If it is very hot and you feel like you might wilt in long rallies, devise a strategy—like chipping and charging every chance you get—to shorten the points.

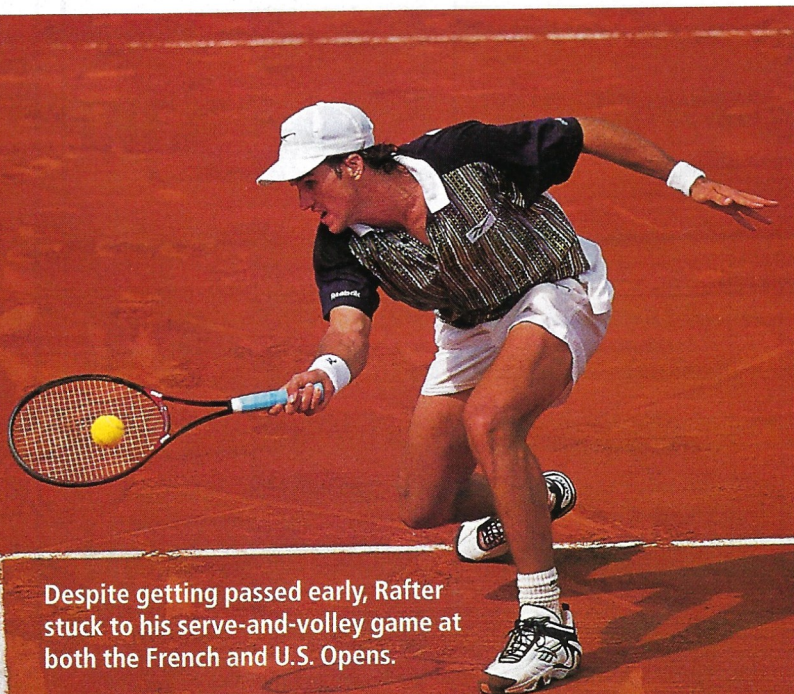
● **Have one or two secondary strategies.** It makes it easier to change strategy during a match if you've thought about more than one way to beat an opponent.

This is one of the reasons why it pays to have a complete game. One of the things that makes Pete Sampras such a tough player is that he can beat you with his serve-and-volley, or out-steady you from the baseline.

● **Make sure your attitude and intensity remain the same regardless of the strategy.** If you moan and groan about having to change your game style, you will have lost a competitive edge to your opponent. On the other hand, it can be devastating to an opponent if you give the impression that you enjoy playing a new style. Also, if you don't put your heart and soul into a match, your full potential won't surface.

Winning in tennis usually requires making a few adjustments to your initial strategy. Just don't bail out too soon, or venture too far from your strengths. In this way, you'll find out how satisfying it is to change your primary game plan to come back and win a match. ●

BY JIM LOEHR



Despite getting passed early, Rafter stuck to his serve-and-volley game at both the French and U.S. Opens.